

Rural District Council of Wells.

Report of Medical Officer of Health for 1903.

STREET, SOMERSET,

JANUARY 22nd, 1904.

To the Rural District Council of Wells.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ending December 31st, 1903.

Area.	58,212 Acres.
Population.	Census 1901—10,767. Estimated to the middle of 1903—10,626.
Geology.	Dolomitic conglomerate at Chewton and Westbury; mountain limestone at Priddy; red marl at Dinder, North Wootton and Rodney Stoke; red marl and river gravel at Wookey; lower lias at West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh and Walton; alluvium and peat at Glastonbury Moor.
Occupation.	Chiefly agricultural, cheese and cider making. Paper factories. Some of the inhabitants of Butleigh and Walton work at the shoe, leather and skin factories at Street and Glastonbury, and at the quarries at Street.
Birth Rate.	217 births registered (104 males, 113 females), giving a birth rate of 20.4 per 1000 per annum.
Death Rate.	222 deaths registered (118 males, 104 females), giving a death rate of 20.8 per 1000 per annum. 94 deaths occurred at the Somerset and Bath County Asylum at Wells. Deducting these, the corrected death rate for the Rural District is 12.04 per 1000 per annum.
Zymotic Death Rate.	Four deaths registered from zymotic disease, giving a zymotic rate of 0.37 per 1000 living.
Infant Mortality.	Infant Mortality per 1000 births is 101.3; 22 deaths under one year being registered.

FOR THE YEAR 1902.

Birth Rate.	Birth Rate per 1000 living	20.4
Death Rate.	Death Rate " "	19.1
Corrected Death Rate.	Corrected Death Rate " "	11.03
Zymotic Rate.	Zymotic Rate " "	1.02
Infant Mortality.	Infant Mortality .. per 1000 births .. .	74.07

Water Supply. The water supply of the District varies considerably. At Butleigh, Draycott, Priddy, Chewton Mendip, Westbury, Dinder, and part of the West Pennard Districts, the supply is good. An arrangement has been made between the Rural District Council and the Glastonbury Corporation, for the latter to supply also the Woodlands district of West Pennard. When this is completed the supply for this parish will be excellent.

BALTONSBOROUGH.—It is satisfactory to report that arrangements have now been made, subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board, between the District Council and the Rural District Council of Shepton Mallet, for the supply of this district.

GODNEY.—The arrangement with the Street District Council for the supply of this District will shortly be able to be put into operation. The completion of the Street scheme being a matter of only a few months.

The supply for part of the MEARE district is unsatisfactory. At ASHCOTT CORNER (Meare), it is drawn either from the open ditches or the river. At MEAREWAY (Meare), some of the wells are in close contiguity to the ditches, into which the sanitary offices, &c., drain. A potent source of danger.

At NORTH WOOTTON the water obtainable is good, but needs protection at its source.

At SHARPHAM there are no springs. The supply being obtained either from the ditches or the canal. Rain water tanks for each dwelling appear to be the most feasible plan for the supply of this scattered district.

I have examined a number of samples of well water during the year.

**Sewerage and
Drainage.**

No general system of drainage exists in the district. Privies with cesspits are principally in use, which being emptied only at long intervals, and at times draining into an adjoining ditch or watercourse, are a source of danger. Where practicable the system of earth closets is encouraged.

In connection with the Public School at Meare I reported that in my opinion the sanitary accommodation provided was insufficient. This was satisfactorily dealt with by the School Authorities increasing the number of sanitary offices to the necessary extent.

At Dinder School large flushing tanks for the sanitary offices have been erected by the owner, and a new drain laid. The sanitary arrangements here are now in excellent order.

**Prevalence of
Disease.**

At the early part of the year Measles was epidemic in the districts of Henton, Wookey and Meare. In each place upon my advice the schools were closed for a period.

Sixteen cases of Scarlatina have been notified during the year : Three in the Out St. Cuthbert District, eight at Westbury-sub-Mendip, three at Chewton Mendip, one at Walton, and one at Rodney Stoke.

Four cases of Diphtheria have been notified : Three in the Meare District, and one (fatal) at Butleigh.

Four cases of Erysipelas have been notified : One in the Out St. Cuthbert District, two at Westbury, and one at Wookey.

Six cases of Enteric Fever have been notified : Two in the Out St. Cuthbert District, one at Wookey, one at West Pennard, and two from the Somerset and Bath County Asylum (one of which terminated fatally). Accompanied by the Inspectors, I have visited the various districts upon the notification of infectious diseases—visiting the premises, and reporting any insanitary condition to the Council. As far as possible isolation has been carried out, and thorough disinfection afterwards effected.

It is satisfactory to note the diminution of infectious cases notified. There being 30 in 1903, as against 77 in 1902.

Factory and Work-
shops Act, 1901.

Inspections have been made under this Act by the Inspectors of Nuisances, and where necessary by myself. Registers of Workshops are held, and the various factories and workshops have been visited and inspected. The sanitation, ventilation, means of escape in case of fire, and the provision of suitable sanitary conveniences have been attended to.

Table of Deaths.

Ages Table of Deaths (excluding deaths in the Asylum).

Under 1 year there were 23 deaths
1 and under 5 years there were 10 deaths
5 " 15 " " 2 "
15 " 25 " " 7 "
25 " 65 " " 12 "
65 and upwards " 54 "

Causes of Death.

				In the Rural District.	In the Asylum.
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	1	
Diphtheria	..	..	..	1	
Enteric Fever	..	..	..		1
Influenza	..	..	..	1	
Diarrhœa	..	..	..	1	
Enteritis	..	..	..	2	
Erysipelas	..	..	..	1	
Phthisis	..	..	..	9	8
Other Tubercular Diseases		..	..	1	
Cancer	..	..	..	7	2
Bronchitis	..	..	..	9	1
Pneumonia	..	..	..	13	9
Alcoholism—Cirrhosis of Liver	..		..	3	
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition		..	..	4	
Heart Diseases	..	..	..	14	9
Accidents	..	..	..	6	2
Suicide	..	..	..	1	
All other causes	..	..	..	54	62

Isolation Hospital.

None. The provision of one recommended. A cottage at Worminster is retained by the Council for the isolation of any case of small-pox that might arise. Its inaccessibility, however, precludes its use for general isolation purposes.

Disinfection Means.

Fumigation by sulphur candles. Disinfectants are also provided gratuitously by the Rural District Council.

Housing of the Working Classes.

Visits paid with the Inspectors. Three cases of overcrowding reported upon and dealt with.

General Inspection.

Slaughter-houses, Bake-houses, and Public Schools visited and inspected.

Bye-Laws.

None. A suitable code required.

I append Tables of Statistics, together with the Reports of the Sanitary Inspectors, to whose co-operation I am again greatly indebted.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE W. EGLINTON.

REPORTS AND SUMMARY OF INSPECTORS OF NUISANCES.

DISTRICT No. 1.

I beg to present my report for the year ended December 31st, 1903.

During the year I have endeavoured to carry out the duties prescribed by the Local Government Board for an Inspector of Nuisances ; attended all the Meetings of the Council to receive their instructions and endeavoured to carry out the instructions of the Medical Officer of Health for the prevention of the spread of Infectious Disease.

The following is a summary of the cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No. of cases.
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains, foul accumulations, etc. ...	25
Animals so kept as to be a nuisance ...	4
Dwelling houses with insufficient privy accommodation ...	6
Dwelling houses overcrowded ...	4
Infected dwellings : Occupiers served with notice as to isolation of patients, disinfection, etc. ...	17
Dwellings and clothing disinfected as directed by the Medical Officer of Health ...	16
Public school premises disinfected as directed by the Medical Officer of Health ...	3
New sewers laid, and old ones repaired ...	3
New drains laid, and old ones repaired ...	10
Bake-houses, slaughter-houses, and public schools inspected ...	26
Dilapidated and dangerous buildings repaired ...	2
Pollution of stream dealt with ...	1
New dwellings erected for which certificates of occupation have been granted ...	5
Formal notices served ...	45

I have also, during the year, visited all the Factories and Workshops in the District, and found the majority of them in a satisfactory state as regards cleanliness, etc.

In one Factory it was found necessary to provide extra means of exit in case of fire, and this has since been done satisfactorily.

In addition to the above, a large number of inspections have been made, and verbal notice given to abate nuisances in my rounds and visits.

PHILIP WILLIAMS,

Inspector No. 1 District.

DISTRICT No. 2.

During the year I have again endeavoured to carry out the instructions of the Local Government Board Order prescribing the duties of Inspectors of Nuisances, reported to, and attended the Meetings of the Council, and carried out their instructions, and also the directions of the Medical Officer of Health for the prevention and spread of Infectious Disease.

The following is a summary of cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No. of cases.
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains and privies, foul accumulations, &c. ...	24
Infected Dwellings : Occupiers served with notices as to isolation of patients, and disinfection of dwellings, clothing, &c. (disinfectants supplied gratuitously by the Council) ..	5
Dwellings, clothing, &c., disinfected under the directions of the Medical Officer of Health ...	5
Dilapidated and dangerous building repaired ...	1
New drains laid (by order) ...	5
New dwelling inspected for granting certificates for occupation—water and sanitary arrangements satisfactory ...	1
Animals so kept as to be a nuisance ...	4
Dwellings without a wholesome supply of water—a good supply provided in each case ...	5
Bake-houses, slaughter-houses and offices of public schools inspected (no bye-laws in force) ...	21
Well cleansed by order of the Council, and a new well sunk at the public school at Westhay ...	2
Slaughter houses repaired by order of the Council ...	2
Case of overcrowding (abated) ...	1
Insufficient, &c., closet accommodation at the Meare public schools, replaced by new troughed closets and proper flushing apparatus ...	2
As directed by the Council the Factories and Workshops have been inspected under "The Factories and Workshops Act, 1901." They are generally satisfactory. The number of places registered being ...	97
Notices served by the Inspector ...	48

In addition to the above a large number of inspections have been made, and verbal notices given by me on my rounds and periodical visits, as well as rendering every assistance to the engineer engaged in carrying out the water supply for Woodlands, and also in making arrangements for the proposed supply of water for the Parish of Baltonsborough.

EDWIN H. PADFIELD,

Inspector No. 2 District.